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17 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
18 **NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**
19 **OAKLAND DIVISION**

20 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
21 GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, et
al.,

22 Plaintiffs,

23 v.

24 DONALD J. TRUMP, in his official capacity as
25 President of the United States, et al.,

26 Defendants.
27
28

Case No.: 3:25-cv-03070-JD

**DECLARATION OF ELIZABETH
TURNER-NICHOLS**

1 **DECLARATION OF ELIZABETH TURNER-NICHOLS**

2

3 I, Elizabeth Turner-Nichols declare as follows:

4 1. I am over 18 years of age and competent to give this declaration. This declaration

5 is based on my personal knowledge, information, and belief.

6 2. I am a program management analyst in facility planning at the VA Palo Alto

7 Health Care System. I have worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs for more than 35

8 years.

9 3. I am the President of the American Federation of Government Employees Local

10 2110 (“Local 2110” or the “Union”). I am also the 12th District Representative for National VA

11 Council, supporting and representing local unions across California and Nevada.

12 4. Local 2110 represents a bargaining unit of approximately 4,000 employees of the

13 Department of Veterans Affairs at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System (“Palo Alto VA”).

14 Local 2110 represents substantially all eligible—i.e., non-management—employees at the Palo

15 Alto VA, including nurses, doctors, mental health providers, food service workers, housekeepers,

16 social workers, clerical employees, custodians, public safety officers, and many others. The

17 March 27, 2025 Executive Order titled “Exclusions from Federal Labor Management Relations

18 Programs” (“Executive Order”) appears to cover all of the workers in Local 2110’s bargaining

19 unit other than police and fire fighters. I am not aware of any represented employees at the Palo

20 Alto VA working on national security issues and was surprised to hear us categorized that way.

21 5. Local 2110’s mission is to advocate for dignity, safety, and fairness on the job so

22 the Department of Veterans Affairs can more effectively serve our nation’s veterans. As the

23 exclusive bargaining representative of these workers, Local 2110 and other locals across District

24 12 provide many services, including working in partnership with agency management to ensure

25 the goals of the Master Collective Bargaining Agreement (“MCBA”) are fulfilled; consulting

26 with management about potential changes and soliciting feedback from workers; filing and

27 negotiating grievances to enforce the terms and conditions of the MCBA; educating both

1 employees and supervisors about their rights and responsibilities and the role of the Union in
2 facilitating a safe, fair, and productive work environment; pursuing arbitrations on behalf of
3 workers; helping employees to access outside resources and navigate internal processes; and
4 providing a space for workers to voice their needs and concerns.

5 6. I expect the Executive Order to have an immediate adverse effect on Local 2110's
6 ability to provide these services to unit members and to accomplish its mission. The Executive
7 Order will also have an immediate adverse impact on workers in the bargaining unit.

8 7. If the Union is no longer the exclusive bargaining representative of the unit, the
9 Union cannot enforce the MCBA. The current MCBA went into effect on August 8, 2023 and
10 would be expected to renew in 2026. The MCBA provides important rights and protections to
11 workers at the Palo Alto VA, including (a) setting terms and conditions for working hours,
12 overtime, sick leave, holidays, and paid time off for workers in the unit; (b) imposing safety and
13 health requirements to ensure the welfare of all Palo Alto VA employees and our patients; (c)
14 establishing protections and procedures for workers regarding reduction-in-force and individual
15 disciplinary actions; (d) providing for an Employee Assistance Program for workers who have
16 problems associated with alcohol, drug, family, legal, financial, and other personal concerns; (e)
17 creating alternative dispute resolution, grievance, and arbitration procedures through which
18 employees, the Union, and agency management resolve disagreements and enforce the MCBA;
19 (f) guaranteeing official time, which allows bargaining unit employees like me to perform union
20 representation activities during times when I would otherwise be in a duty status, without loss of
21 pay or charge to annual leave.

22 Without the Union to represent them and enforce the MCBA, workers at the Palo Alto
23 VA will not have the benefit of those rights and protections going forward. I understand that the
24 Department of Veterans Affairs is also likely to rescind the MCBA under the Executive Order.

25 8. As a result of the Executive Order, numerous pending grievances to vindicate
26 workers' rights under the MCBA will be left unresolved. At this time, I would estimate that
27 Local 2110 has approximately 20 pending grievances, not including dozens of grievances related

1 to the administration's recent return-to-office mandate that have been consolidated into a
2 national grievance brought by the National VA Council.

3 9. Voluntary dues paid by approximately 1,600 Local 2110 members fund the
4 Union's activities. Most of those dues are collected through voluntary payroll deductions. If
5 AFGE can no longer receive dues through payroll deduction under the Executive Order, that will
6 make it significantly more difficult for the Union to continue to function and to provide the
7 services and protection to unit members listed above.

8 10. Official time is critically important to enable me and other Union officers to
9 represent VA employees. Representational activities during official time include working
10 collaboratively with Palo Alto VA management to solve workplace problems or implement new
11 initiatives, talking with fellow employees about their rights and management's rights under the
12 MCBA, coordinating with other locals and identifying trends or issues across Department of
13 Veterans Affairs facilities, and representing workers through the grievance process. Although my
14 Union officer colleagues and I are committed to serving our members, the lack of official time
15 will make it much more difficult and will severely limit our ability to work collaboratively with
16 agency management during business hours.

17 11. I have been talking to members at the Palo Alto VA and across District 12 and
18 workers are very concerned about the effect of the Executive Order on their ability to take
19 collective action through the Union. Collective bargaining ensures a fair and balanced workplace
20 by creating a safe space to have a voice in the conditions of employment. By removing collective
21 bargaining and restricting employee rights, the Executive Order undermines the guarantee of due
22 process and makes workers reluctant to raise issues related to health, safety, and working
23 conditions

24 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States that the foregoing is
25 true and correct. Executed April 1, 2025, in Washington, D.C.

Signed by:



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Elizabeth Turner-Nichols